

Inspection of Oakfield Primary School

Scott Drive, Wickford, Essex SS12 9PW

Inspection dates: 16 and 17 July 2024

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Early years provision **Good**

Previous inspection grade Good

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a happy and welcoming school where pupils get on well together. They recognise and celebrate each other's talents and achievements. Pupils understand the importance of hard work and responsibility. This helps them achieve well.

Routines and values are clear and well established. Pupils rise to meet the high expectations adults have of them. They strive to show the three simple rules: 'be ready, be respectful, be safe'. Pupils value the recognition they receive for modelling these, including through celebration certificates and in assemblies.

Pupils behave well. They feel safe, trusting that adults will look after them. Pupils are extremely polite, courteous and attentive. They welcome visitors warmly, holding doors open for adults and each other. Pupils take turns when talking and listen carefully to what others have to say. They value the rewards on offer, including house points, achievement certificates or winning a prize from the book vending machine for reading regularly at home.

Pupils make a significant contribution to their school. Eco and school councillors plan and carry out work and events to promote their aims. Recent visits from a Paralympian and a professional drummer were extremely popular.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

The school has recently overhauled its curriculum. Pupils now benefit from a curriculum that is broad, engaging and well thought out. The knowledge and skills pupils need to learn are carefully sequenced. Teachers are clear about what pupils need to know and remember. However, because some subject plans have changed, there are gaps in what pupils can remember from previous learning in some subjects. These are quickly closing. The school has not had enough time to check exactly how well all pupils are learning the new curriculum.

The school acted swiftly to address weaknesses found at its last inspection. There are new, well-designed approaches to the teaching of reading in key stage 2. These ensure that pupils can read and understand more complex texts. They now learn and remember new vocabulary at an impressive rate. A revised approach to teaching writing is improving pupils' ability to write in depth and creatively. Nevertheless, some pupils do not take enough care when presenting their written work across the curriculum. Teachers do not always address this.

Early reading is well taught. Pupils learn phonics in a logical and systematic order. The books pupils read are closely matched to the sounds they know. Pupils soon begin reading with fluency and comprehension. Older pupils who find reading difficult now receive high-quality support. Pupils who need help with phonics receive well-tailored support to become confident readers. The well-stocked library and the outdoor 'Treehouse' help promote a love of reading.

Children get off to a positive start in the early years. Carefully designed activities help children remember much of what they have been taught. For example, children have a secure understanding of how to share counters equally into groups, because they have learned to draw diagrams to help them strengthen and explain their understanding.

The school has made significant improvements to the quality of education for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The school identifies these pupils quickly and accurately, putting appropriate support in place. Adults are skilled at adapting teaching. The quality of individual planning for pupils with SEND has improved immensely. The school has introduced new checks to ensure that pupils who receive extra help make strong progress. Pupils with SEND learn well.

The design of the curriculum, along with a wide range of extra-curricular activities such as karate and dance, develops pupils' talents and interests well. Class discussions and assemblies focus on topics including current affairs, personal safety, well-being and citizenship. This prepares pupils well for their future lives. Visits to places of interest, including the British Museum, further enrich pupils' learning.

The school is calm and orderly. The pupils are positive and respectful due to the clear routines and high staff expectations. Pupils' motivation and attitudes to learning are positive. They engage well and are keen to learn.

Leaders have transformed much at the school in a short period of time. They have prioritised the right things. At all levels, leaders understand their roles and responsibilities. The school has tackled weaknesses well. The school has a clear vision and a capacity for continued improvement. Staff value the support leaders provide. They appreciate how leaders give them the time, training and resources they need to do their jobs well.

Governors work strategically. They challenge and support leaders and they make decisions in the best interests of pupils.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school has reviewed and changed the curriculum in some subjects. Teachers are delivering the new curriculum in these subjects effectively. Leaders, though, have not had enough time to refine assessment processes or review the curriculum's impact in these subjects to check that pupils are learning well. Leaders should ensure they use assessment information to check that pupils are

learning well and to make any further adaptations to the curriculum that are needed to address any gaps pupils have.

- Teachers do not consistently ensure that all pupils take enough care in how they present their written work across the curriculum. This means that some work is untidy and pupils do not always take pride in their writing. The school should ensure that teachers are clear about expectations for the presentation of pupils' writing and that these expectations and standards are applied consistently across all classes and subjects.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	131806
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10323690
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	417
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Deri Hollywell
Headteacher	Lynn Cooney
Website	www.oakfield.essex.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	25 and 26 April 2023, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The headteacher took up post in January 2023, shortly before the previous inspection.
- The school does not use any off-site providers of alternative education.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Prior to the inspection, the lead inspector reviewed documents on the school's website, as well as published information about the school's performance and previous Ofsted inspections.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, science and history. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the

curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. An inspector listened to some pupils read to a familiar adult.

- Inspectors held meetings with leaders, including governors, and with a representative of the local authority.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors took account of a range of other school information, including development plans, policies, minutes of meetings of the governing body and reports from the local authority.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents and carers through responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. Inspectors also spoke informally with parents at the start of the school day. An inspector held a telephone conversation with a parent.
- Inspectors gathered the views of staff through discussions conducted throughout the inspection and via Ofsted's staff survey.
- Inspectors spoke with groups of pupils throughout the inspection to gather their views and considered responses from Ofsted's pupil survey.

Inspection team

Nick Rudman, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Rob James	Ofsted Inspector
Ceri Jones	Ofsted Inspector

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